GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:352
ANSWERED ON:20.10.2008
POST HARVEST WASTAGE
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of post harvest wastage of food crops, fruits and vegetables recorded during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government has conducted any study to know the reasons for such wastage;and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to check the wastage?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a): No specific study regarding wastage of food crops, fruits and vegetables has been conducted by Department of Agriculture & Cooperation during the last three years.

(b): The reasons for post-harvest losses as per the Millennium Study, State of the Indian farmers, conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture in the year 2004, are due to lack of post-harvest technology and non-existence of integrated transport, storage and marketing facilities etc.

(c): In order to protect the losses of foodgrains and fruits and vegetables at different stages of marketing,the Government of India has initiated action on agricultural marketing reforms by bringing amendments in the Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development & Regulation) Act (APMC Act) on the lines of Model Act circulated to all States during 2003. The emphasis has been given to reduce the marketing channel by bringing direct marketing, contract farming and to improve the marketing infrastructure by involving private sector in development of infrastructure and setting up of markets with modem physical infrastructural facilities. The Ministry has also implemented capital investment subsidy scheme of Development/Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization, Rural Godown Scheme respectively for development of marketing infrastructure providing, storage facilities for fanners and other market participants respectively.The market information is important for taking appropriate marketing decisions by the fanners.The Ministry has also launched a Central Sector Scheme of Marketing Research and Information Network (AGMARKNET) since March, 2000 for dissemination of market information to farmers.

For horticulture crops,the Government has launched two Centrally Sponsored Schemes`The Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States and Sikkim` has been launched during the year 2001-02 which was also extended to the Himalayan States of Jarnmu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttrakhand during 2003-04. `The National Horticulture Mission` has been launched during 2005-06 for the remaining States. Both the schemes provide assistance for creating post-harvest infrastructure, including cold storage facilities as back-ended subsidy @ 33.33% of the project cost with a ceiling of Rs.60.00 lakh per unit for hilly and tribal areas and @ 25% of the project cost not exceeding Rs. 50.00 lakh per unit for other States. During 2006-07, a new Component has been introduced under the National Horticulture Mission to facilitate setting up of Modern Terminal Markets in the country, which will have state-of-the-art cold chain and other infrastructure and will help in establishing an efficient supply chain right from the farm gate to the consumer/processor/exporter.

The National Horticulture Board (NHB) is also implementing programmes aided at reducing the losses of horticulture produce through the schemes `Capital Investment Subsidy for Construction/Expansion/ Modernization of cold storage/storages for Horticulture Produce` having the same norms and `Development of Commercial Horticulture though Production and Post-Harvest Management` providing back ended subsidyÂ® 20% of the total project cost with a maximum limit of Rs. 30.00 lakhs for North-Eastern /Hilly/Tribal Areas States and Rs. 25,00 lakhs for other States.The above measures initiated by the Govt. of India will facilitate reduction in post harvest losses of agricultural produce.